



Testimony of Carol Scully
Director of Advocacy, The Arc of Connecticut, Inc.
LCO No. 4628 H.B. 5326 An Act Concerning The Affordable Housing Appeals
Process And Removing The Municipal Opt Out Deadline For Accessory Apartments

February 27, 2023

Members of the Housing Committee: Co-Chair Representative Luxenberg, Co-Chair Senator Moore, Vice Chair Representative Khan, Vice Chair Senator Lesser, Ranking Member Senator Sampson, Ranking Member Representative Scott, Senator Fonfara, Senator Hochadel, Representative Brown, Representative Butler, Representative Gonzalez, Representative Roberts, Representative Polleta, Representative Weir, Representative Zullo:

The Arc Connecticut is the oldest and the largest community-based organization advocating for and with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families. We work tirelessly to uphold our vision that every individual and family living with I/DD has access to the information, advocacy, and skills they need to support their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes.

We are a chapter of The Arc of The United States, which has 675 chapters in 49 states and over 5,000 service locations. Nationwide, we have approximately 7,000 board members, 124,000 staff, 46,000 volunteers and collectively we serve more than 1 million people with I/DD and their family members.

In Connecticut, our 14 Arc local chapters deliver over \$100 million in jobs, supports and services to thousands of people in 162 communities. Together Arcs are the largest provider of supports and services for people with I/DD and their families in the state, providing about 96% of the services.

The Arc of Connecticut opposes H.B. 5326 as this bill would weaken the 8-30g statute and would not create additional affordable housing/homes. This bill also proposes to count existing market-rate homes/housing as affordable without benefiting low-income persons including persons with intellectual developmental disabilities.

Since 1990, 8-30g has created thousands of affordable housing units, allowing low to moderate income persons to afford housing that is based on rent not exceeding 30% of their income.

Currently in Connecticut, approximately 29 out of 169 towns have above a 10% benchmark of affordable housing units. Allocating such need to municipalities will help ensure more affordable housing units in each municipality, housing that will be available to persons with intellectual developmental disabilities, developmental disabilities and Autism. As we plan for Connecticut to age in place, we need to include the disability community in these plans.

Unfortunately, CT's high cost of living makes it difficult for people with disabilities to afford housing, especially if they don't qualify for state waiver supports and or rely solely on Supplemental Social Security Income/Disability payments. Living as independently as possible in the community are among the most important values and goals shared by people with disabilities especially persons with Intellectual, Developmental Disabilities (IDD), their families and advocates. Persons with IDD are at risk of homelessness if more affordable housing is not created in Connecticut. Nationwide approximately one-third of homeless persons are persons with IDD.

Every municipality must have affordable housing options so their residents can age in place in the community of their choice and/or find affordable housing near their place of employment.

The Arc of Connecticut urges the legislature to not pass H.B. 5326 allowing towns to have an opt-out for compliance with affordable housing regulations.

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